

OUR LORD'S HUMANITY—A SWEET SOURCE OF COMFORT NO. 1295

A SERMON
DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

*“Then there came again and touched me one like the
appearance of a man, and he strengthened me.”
Daniel 10:18.*

WE are not able, as yet, to bear the full revelation of divine things. If any intellect had been strong enough, if any heart had been pure enough to see the exceeding glory of the covenant angel, surely Daniel possessed such a head and heart; but even he fell upon his face, and was cast into a dead swoon, for he was unable to bear the sight of the man clothed in linen, whose “body was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning.” We ought to be thankful that our God has revealed no more. The word of God is as excellent in its darkness as in its brightness. Had it unveiled more, its discoveries would have been no more beneficial—perhaps they had been less profitable. As it is, there is far more within this book than you and I have seen as yet, and we need not wish that more had been written. If we entertain such a desire, our loving Lord may silence us with the words, “I have many things to show unto you, but you cannot bear them now.”

It appears from our text that, when weighed down under a sense of the divine presence, the readiest method of consolation is found in the touch of a certain sublime, mysterious, human hand. I know it is very usual to say that the personage who appeared to Daniel was the angel Gabriel, but I cannot bring myself to believe that he is the angel of this chapter. Surely this glorious being was that uncreated messenger of the covenant who, though not born into our nature in Daniel's day, yet took upon Himself the similitude of a man for a time, as He had done before when on special occasions He appeared to others of the saints before His actual incarnation! Even if we grant that an *angel* was the person who touched Daniel, still the truth which I wish to bring out will be none the less clear, namely, that even if an *angel* should wish to comfort us, he must assume a visible *human* form, and he must lay upon us a sympathetic hand like our own so that there shall be at any rate, “the appearance of a man,” or otherwise we shall not be strengthened. If this is granted as true, I shall not insist upon the text immediately referring to Christ, but I shed the general principle, and say this—comfort is best brought to men by a *man*, and if we are to be strengthened, the touch of “one like the appearance of a *man*” is needed. Therefore we may without difficulty rise to the reflection that it is always to us the richest and highest comfort, as believers in Christ that the Lord Jesus is a man, and when He strengthens us, it is full often by laying His human hand upon us. He reveals His kinship with us, and our spirit is consoled and strengthened by a sense of His union with us. My one objective is, by the Spirit's aid, to draw water from the ancient well of our Lord's *humanity*.

The Son of God is also the Son of man. We none of us doubt His Deity, and therefore we shall be able to spend all our time in this sermon in musing upon His manhood, and the joys contained in that truth of God. Jesus is God. But Jesus was born, Jesus lived, Jesus died, Jesus rose again, and Jesus is in heaven, *as a man*. He is God and man in one person, but there is no confusion of natures; He is neither a deified man nor a humanized God. His Godhead is altogether Godhead, and His manhood altogether manhood. We must not divide the person, nor confuse the natures; He is as truly man as if He were not God, and as truly God as if He had never assumed the nature of man. It is of His manhood that we are now about to speak. We shall not attempt to prove it, but shall simply endeavor to show how the touch of the hand of Jesus, the man, strengthens us.

I. And, first, dear friends, does it not cheer us WHEN WE LABOR UNDER A SENSE OF LONELINESS?

If we are true to Him, we are strangers and sojourners with Him, as all our fathers were. Before His cross we find ourselves to be strangers in this land, even as He was, for as the world knew Him not, so it knows us not, and as it placed Him outside the camp, so also does it make aliens of us. It is sweet to feel,

when walking the separated path, "I am a stranger with You"—a stranger in the world as You are, an exile as You were; in such solitude the manhood of Jesus is a delicious cordial!

Some feel alone because *they are the only ones of their house who serve the Lord*. How you wish it were otherwise! It is your daily prayer that all your kindred may be followers of Christ, but they are not so. Perhaps they openly oppose you, and make your life unhappy through their hard speeches. Well, there is a friend that sticks closer than a brother! There is a brother who will hear what you have to say, no, who knows all that is in your heart before you utter it! He is the antitype of Joseph, and He knows what it is to be separated from His brethren. Of all that ever lived He was the loneliest, by far, and therefore He sympathizes with the forsaken ones.

The child of God as he grows in grace becomes lonelier under certain aspects, just as the higher mountains have fewer familiarities, till Mont Blanc speaks to no equal in his awful height, but communes only with himself. They that serve God much and well—and draw near to His innermost presence—in that proportion draw away from men, as to deriving comfort from them. But, oh, there are no heights to which Jesus has not risen, no attainments which He has not surpassed! That glorious man is with you—with you in the singleness of heart with which you serve your God! He is with you in the perfect consecration which the Holy Spirit has given you, with you in the intimate fellowship of your soul with the eternal Father! In your highest flight of ecstasy there is still a man at your right hand saying, "Fear not, for I am with you: be not dismayed, for I am your God."

It falls to the lot of some Christians to stand alone *in their contention for the faith*. Perhaps there is made known to them what has not been revealed to others, or which being revealed, others have refused to see—or seeing have been afraid to declare. In such cases true-hearted men find themselves standing very much alone, at least for a time. They have a treasure which others do not prize, and they are bound to show it, for to this end was the treasure placed in their earthen vessel. God has not committed it to them for themselves alone, but He has put them in trust with the gospel for the good of others, and they must speak it out. If when they do so they hear no sympathetic answer, but are met in the spirit of controversy and unkind rebuke, it is blessed for them to know that "the faithful and true witness" is the champion of every honest testimony.

He stood alone as our atoning sacrifice, and into that loneliness we never intrude, but *in all other work He is our companion*, even He who is called "The man Christ Jesus," and therefore we shall be cheered by His presence if we find ourselves without earthly helpers. Oh, if we had our choice between having an angel to always live in our house, and to know our secrets, or to have the man Christ Jesus to be our constant friend, we should not deliberate in our choice, but choose our Lord's company at once! An angel would often afflict us—we would be afraid to confess our littleness to him, we would fear that he would think them meanness. His unsuffering nature we would suspect of contempt, and we would be ill at ease in his presence. But such a feeling as that does not cross our mind when we have to deal with one who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities! We know our Lord to be true man, and therefore we speak to Him with familiarity, and make Him our heart's dearest companion. Lonely one, take care that you have no secrets apart from Jesus! *Love* your loneliness rather than seek to escape from it, if it brings you nearer to Him! You will do well to be always ready for Christian fellowship, yes, and to *seek* it, but do not live on it, for fellowship with Jesus is sweeter than fellowship with saints' Master! I know that fellowship with saints is poor stuff if it comes not through fellowship with the saints' Master. When communion comes from *His* hands, and we come to the feast in *His* company, then every brother and sister who sits at the table adds to our enjoyment, but if we approach the table to see *them*, and forget *Him*, then everybody adds to our discomfort, and forms another veil to hide the Lord. Cling to the Christ of the garden and the cross, and find, O lonely one, your sweetest joy in the thought that He is a man such as you are! Sing with me those sweet lines—

*"When gathering clouds around I view,
And days are dark and friends are few,
On Him I lean, who not in vain
Experienced every human pain!
He sees my needs, allays my fears,
And counts and treasures up my tears!"*

II. How sweet it is to feel the touch of the humanity of Christ WHEN WE ARE HUMBLLED IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD.

I know not, brethren, whether you are often favored to behold the shining of the divine glory, and to feel the warmth of it in your own soul. This I know—if you are, you find it a wearing and breaking joy. If we had more of it, it might be a destroying delight, for “even our God is a consuming fire,” and when we come nearest to Him, and best understand that He is love, the glory of that love overcomes us! We cannot eat much honey, neither can we endure much sensible enjoyment of the divine glory—I mean much *comparatively*, for of course it is much to us, but it is not much compared with what He could reveal if we were able to endure it! Have you ever felt what it is to be as if you were *not*—to see your comeliness turned into corruption, your excellence all despoiled, and yourself not only lying low in the presence of God, but being as if you had no being at all—as if you had no separate existence in the presence of such wondrous Majesty, such awe-inspiring love? You feel no dread; far from it! And no unhappiness, but the very reverse—you yourself seem gone, and God is all-in-all. A blessed extinction of *self* makes room for infinite love! There is not one covenant blessing but what, if we understood it, would have this humbling effect upon us; every gift which God bestows upon His chosen, if rightly understood and truly grasped, would make us say with Abraham, “I that am but dust and ashes,” or make us sit down with David and exclaim, “Why this to *me*? Is this the manner of man, O Lord God?” Now, at such times of self-annihilation, it is strengthening to the mind, which is almost ready to expire beneath the load of heavenly glory, to feel the *touch of that hand*, and to perceive that He who is our God is also very near. It is bliss to me to perceive that the Creator has become one with the creature, for Jesus Christ was born at Bethlehem; Jesus ate, drank, slept, wept, bled and died—and now He sits at the right hand of the Father; and so, notwithstanding the awe which crushes me, I see an infinite Condescension—no, I perceive a near kinship which draws me close to God Himself; so that I say, “My Father,” and with the next breath, “My Brother, my Friend, my Husband, my Best-Beloved.” I wonder what we would have done if we had known so much of God, and had not known Christ! I suppose I am speaking paradoxically, and saying what I should not say, for we never could have known God except in Jesus Christ in such a way as we do know Him; but if such a thing had been possible, it would have been destructive to us! But now, God in Jesus Christ, how blessed! God *out* of Christ, we know nothing of, nor need we. Luther used to say, “I will have nothing to do with an absolute God.” Beware of attempting to deal with God apart from the Mediator, for no man comes unto the Father but through His Son, Christ Jesus!

Thus have we felt the touch of the human hand strengthening us when we have fallen prostrate under a deep sense of the glory of God.

III. Thirdly, brothers and sisters, for here, perhaps, you sisters take precedence over us—IN SORROW—oh, how blessed it is to feel the touch of the man's hand!

Bodily pain is the portion of many of God's people. They are seldom long without it. Weakness, constant weakness, keeps many of God's precious ones tied to the bedchamber or to the house, and often the beloved means of grace are taken from them because of their inability to come up to the assembly of God's saints. Others endure the affliction of poverty—with all their economy and industry, they find it difficult to provide things honest in the sight of all men. Some true Christians are naturally of a somber temperament, and to them even summer weather has a wintry aspect. The Lord has allotted to each one of His children a cross to carry, and His loving wisdom led Him to do so. Those who are for the most part without trial, are usually the weakest in the church of God; they are usually the least spiritual, the least instructed in experimental truth, and altogether the least knowledgeable in divine things. We have our sorrows, but have we not found by actual experience that the choicest consolation for sorrow is the fact that Jesus Christ knows all about it and is with us in it? How often has that verse run through my soul like a trumpet note to urge me onward when otherwise I should have retreated from the battle?—

*“In every pang that rends the heart,
The man of sorrows had a part.
With boldness, therefore, at the throne
Let us make all our sorrows known.”*

There is no abyss of grief into which Jesus has not descended! Sickness of body and pangs of soul, bereavement, poverty, scorn, slander, desertion, treachery—He knows all these things! Malice, envy, contempt, and deadly hate all shot their fiery darts against Him; He has sounded the depths of the ocean of sorrow. Did He not say that He was exceedingly sorrowful even unto death, and did not the sweat of blood which covered His face show how terrible were the inward agonies through which His soul was passing? Prince of sorrow are You, O Jesus! Emperor in the realm of woe, are You, O Christ; You could

say far more truly than the prophet of old, "I am the man that has seen affliction." Now, brothers and sisters, our bitter cup is sweetened, for His dear lips have touched the brim; no, He has drained it to its dregs! Now, brethren, our hard sorrow is softened because it is only a piece from that loaf of which He ate the most. Well may we be satisfied to go through the valley of tears, for it is "the King's dale," and all along it we can track His footprints. We know them, for they show the marks of the nails; they are the footprints of the Crucified! Joined with us in every grief and woe, He is always at our side when our hearts are heavy. He carried up to heaven the same human heart which was pierced below—and there He remembers Calvary, and all the griefs He suffered on our behalf. He still sympathizes with us. I delight in that thought of one of our hymn writers, where he says—

*"Yet even after death His heart
For us, its tribute poured."*

After our Lord was dead His heart yielded blood and water for our sakes, so that after death He was still in sympathy with us. Jesus still gives His heart to His people. Glory be to His name! Who among you will refuse to shoulder your cross now? Did you lay it down just now and say, "I can carry it no longer? I must give up in despair"? Why, He carries the heavier end for you! Put your shoulder to the burden which He consecrates by His fellowship. It will grow light when you think that He once carried it! When Alexander's troops were on long marches, that which cheered them was that Alexander always walked as far as they; if they were very thirsty in the broiling sun, and if any water was to be found, of course they brought it first to Alexander. Should they not first consider their king? But he nobly put the cooling draught aside, and said, "As long as a sick man needs water, Alexander will go without." This made each warrior strong, for his king fared as he fared. Let this strengthen us tonight. Jesus Christ puts His hand upon us, and says, "Fear not. I am with you in your sorrow. My heart is as your heart; therefore be of good cheer."

IV. I will not dwell long on any one thought, but leave you to dilate upon it. The fact that Jesus Christ is a man, such as we are, should greatly comfort us in ALL OUR STRUGGLES.

It seems hard, this battle of life, this "contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the many"—this fighting against sin, this contention against inbred corruption, this warring against spiritual wickedness in high places; and we are apt to think sometimes, "Can we ever win? Is not the battle too difficult?" In such moments look at yonder man who sits upon the throne of God! He is the typical man, the representative to us of what manhood should be, no, of what through His grace it is! He wrestled hard, as hard as you do, but He won the victory! You are tempted; does that cause you doubt? He was "tempted in all points like as we are, yet He did not sin. Are you distressed by the contentions of godless men? "Consider Him who endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest you be weary and faint in your minds." The struggle is not as difficult with you as it was with Him. You have an easier battle to fight, and you have God's promise that, as your days, your strength shall be. Now, as He overcame, finding strength enough for His conflict, He is to you a living prophecy of what you shall do through Him! Yes, brothers and sisters, you shall trample sin beneath your feet, you shall take the strongholds of the adversary, and grace shall reign within your heart! The world, the flesh, and the devil, that trinity of evils, shall be overcome by you; you shall be a conqueror, no, listen! "More than a conqueror through Him that loved you."

*"As surely as He overcame,
And triumphed once for you;
As surely you that love His name,
Shall triumph in Him too!"*

"Did a man ever do that?" asked a bold spirit concerning some renowned achievement, "for if one man did it, another man shall." It was a brave speech! But let us apply it to Christ for a moment. Did He, a man, live in the midst of this world amid fierce temptations—and did He come out of that scorching furnace with not so much as the smell of fire upon Him? Then the eternal God can work the same in other men, and we may believe, no, we may be *confident* that the victory shall be unto us through the blood of the Lamb! Be of good courage, O sons of men, for the Son of man has won the victory! Throw not away your confidence. Let not your swords be laid aside. Jesus, Jesus the representative man, has conquered, and therefore those who are in Him, "strengthened with all might by His Spirit in the inner man," shall conquer also! Herein is comfort.

V. Further, brothers and sisters, in the fifth place, what a blessed thing it has been to look at the manhood of Jesus Christ AT TIMES WHEN WE HAVE BEEN DECEIVED IN OUR BRETHREN.

Our natural tendency to idolatry tempts us to confide in man. Among religious people there always has been a tendency, much to be deplored, to lean a good deal upon men of eminence—upon ministers, leaders, and men of experience. We get a great deal of good from them, blessed be God, and therefore we conceive a high opinion of them as indeed we may rightly do if we attribute all that is praiseworthy to the God who gave it. But every now and then we pass beyond the proper confidence which a younger brother may place in an elder, and we pin our *faith* to the man's sleeve, and make our hope, in a measure, dependent upon his sincerity. This is the peculiar sin of young Christians, but I have sometimes met with it in simple-hearted persons even in extreme old age. The "dear minister," the "venerable man of God"—they have looked far too much to him; alas, there has come a discovery that man is only man, and that some men are not saints though they talk in a saintly manner! There has been the explosion of a profession, the total casting down of an idol, and the breaking of it to pieces—and at such times the faith of many has been grievously staggered; even those who are somewhat more established, have nevertheless received a grievous blow. We have seen Judas again, and Demas, and Hymenaeus, and Philetus, and old Ahitophel rising from the dead, and we have been filled with grief. At such times it is most cheering to remember that there is one man who will never deceive us! There is one who has not uttered a Promise which He will not fulfill, nor won from us a confidence which He will not more than justify. It is such a blessed thing to see *Jesus* standing there—honesty, integrity, uprightness, righteousness incarnate, truth His very nature with no sinister motives or desires to make Him subtle for His own gain, but altogether disinterested—living for the glory of God, and the good of His people!

To get back into His bosom again, and to nestle there and feel—"Child, here is a heart that is always warm with true love. You are safe here"—this is rest indeed! To get back to Jesus and say, "Now am I neither of Paul, nor of Apollos, nor of Cephas, but of Christ." To hear the news of religious strife in this denomination and that, and, amidst the clashing elements of different ecclesiastical parties, to say, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity"; and clinging to Jesus, to feel "But *this* is not vanity, *this* is reality, *this* is the truth of God!" Oh, to stay with Jesus, brothers and sisters—never to stir away from Him, and to feel that the truth which you can trust, the integrity on which you can rely is embodied in the man Christ Jesus! Is not man the meanest thing in all creation? Do you not feel him to be so when he deceives you? But, then, when you look at Jesus, how manhood rises in your esteem. After all, He is capable of something grand and glorious, and you bless the Lord Jesus who has by the sublime perfection of His character redeemed our nature from its frightful degradation.

VI. Again, I hope I shall not weary you. Surely I may continue to draw out the silken threads of such a subject. Children of God will find the doctrine of Christ's humanity to be wonderfully comfortable to them IN SEASONS OF DOUBT.

Many of you are free from grievous doubts, and I would be the last to sow them in your minds. I love Cowper's picture of the poor woman with her pillow and bobbins, who only knew her Bible, true, and left all the philosophies in the world to those who cared for them. But there is a class of disciples like Thomas who think much, and are apt to doubt much; they do not love doubts—they hate them, yet their doubts often go very deep, and undermine the most precious doctrines. The men are really steadfast in the faith, but it costs them many exercises and painful questions. They ask, "How is this? And, "Why is that?" Perhaps they have more brains than heart. I suppose many of us get into that condition, and do you know to me a sight of my Lord is my great security—a sheet anchor which has held me fast in times of skepticism and doubt. I cannot doubt when I see *Him*! When I turn over the Bible, and read of His character, I find it impossible to be a disbeliever! If any *man* invented the character of Christ, I will worship him—He *must* be divine to have created such perfection! It seems to me that if the life of Jesus were not a fact, the very fiction would be a creation demanding perfect holiness in the inventor; who but a perfectly Holy being could have conceived a character like that of our Lord and Master? Every other character has its flaw. Man may be likened to a statue I once saw in Cambridge, which I think is in Trinity College Library now—a statue of Byron. I remember looking at it from one point of view, and the gentleman who showed it to me said, "There, sir, there is the poet!" Yes, and a noble face it is, full of high thought, and rare imagination; and you admire the man. "Come round to this point," said my conductor, "for there is the man who dared defy the Deity." You could see at once the semi-maniac Byron,

lost to all pure and devout emotion! The artist had sketched the duplicate man, the true Byron, a man both great and wicked!

Now, if some artist able to exhibit the whole truth could thus set you forth in marble, your friends might go to ever so many points, and say, "Beautiful! Beautiful! Admirable! Commendable! Lovely!" and so on; but when they came to some one point (and some of us may be very thankful that people do not get to that point) they would exclaim, "Alas," and they would not like to say much more! They would feel the conviction that things are not altogether what they seem to be, and that flaws are discoverable in those they most admire. It is not so with Jesus. Survey Him before and behind, on the right and on the left. Come upon Him at midnight; look at Him in midday. Watch Him as a child; see Him as a man. Look at Him alone; behold Him in company. See Him in His pomp as He rides through Jerusalem; see Him in His shame as they hound Him to His death. From every point He is perfect, absolutely perfect; you cannot improve Him, you cannot hint at a fault in Him! This is to candid minds a solid establishment, rendering it hard to be a doubter; and it becomes to believers who love their Lord and Master a blessed chain which holds them fast, so that they cannot give up the truth of God they have received, for they have not followed cunningly devised fables. If Peter and James and John, when they saw their Lord transfigured, were convinced, so are we also when we view His human life on earth, for His whole career is the transfiguration of humanity—a wonderful display of how poor human nature's garments can be made whiter than any fuller can make them—how the brightness of manhood can excel the glory of the sun at noonday! This consoles us amidst the battle of doubtful thought.

VII. Further, dear brothers and sisters, how blessedly the touch of our Redeemer's human hand COMFORTS US IN THE PROSPECT OF DEATH.

Unless the Lord comes, "It is appointed unto all men once, to die." In the presence of death and the grave, when we really get to look at them, there is hardly one among us who does not begin to ask himself, "Is it all right?" Must we die? We shrink back—we cannot bear it! "Shall I rise again? If, after my skin, worms devour this body, shall I, in my flesh, see God? Does it seem likely? Is it possible? Can these dry bones live?" We have read the burial service many times, and heard it read over our friends. We have thought that we believed in the resurrection, but when it comes to *ourselves*, and we are about to die, and sickness tells upon us, and then we ask the question over again, "Shall we rise? And is it true? Is it *really* true?" Often and often have I put myself through my paces over that question, and this is where I always land—I know that the man Christ Jesus rose from the dead. I am sure of that. How do I know it? No fact in human history was ever better attested, or even so well attested as this—that Jesus, who was crucified, did truly rise from the dead. The witnesses are so many. Read Paul's summing up of the evidence in Corinthians. He shows that sometimes Christ was seen by one disciple alone, then by twelve, and on one occasion, at any rate, by 500 witnesses at once! Jesus showed Himself alive by indisputable proofs—we are sure that He rose from the dead. Well, then, I know that *I* shall too, for the apostle, by inspiration, has put the two things together—"If Christ rose not, then is there no resurrection of the dead. But if Christ rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" One man has broken from the prison of the grave, and therefore so will all who are like He! Brothers and sisters, in the Gaza of mortality, we shall escape from this city, for our Samson rose in the morning, and took away the gates, posts, bars and all, and carried them to the top of the hill! The gates of the grave are open—pass through, you redeemed of the Lord! He has torn away the bars of the sepulcher; it is a dungeon no longer; the tomb is now a bedchamber where you shall sleep a little while, till your body shall be prepared for the Lord's embrace—

*"What, though our inbred sins require
Our flesh to see the dust,
Yet as the Lord our Savior rose,
So all His followers must."*

VIII. Once more. Children of God, the manhood of Christ ought to be a great comfort to you WHEN YOU ARE SEEKING TO DO GOOD AMONG YOUR FELLOW MEN.

This is an awful world, this world of human beings. If you ride along the main streets, it looks to be a very respectable city, but just go down the side streets! And from these, turn into the courts and alleys! Enter Jack Ketch, or Tiger Bay; visit those regions where the means of livelihood are sin, where drunkenness is the chief delight, where debauchery has ceased to be pleasure, and has become an occupation—where every evil is transacted unblushingly. Oh, God! When we think of what humanity is, even

where Christianity keeps it within bounds, and then think of what it is when left to itself to bow down before blocks of wood and stone, and offer orgies of vice as the adoration of God, we might justly say, "Oh, it is a foul thing! Leave it alone! It scarcely deserves pity." If we could but entertain the comfortable notions of the Corinthian brethren, and believe that the world is not to be converted, how relaxed we might be! We could sit down and care no more for this poor earth, because the Lord Jesus is coming, and the thing will end—and there is nothing for us to do but to pull here and there a man off the sinking ship, for the kingdoms of this world are never to become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ—and He is never to have dominion from sea to sea. At any rate, not by the ordinary method of the proclamation of the gospel—and we may as well go to bed and enjoy ourselves, for effort is needless where success is hopeless! So they tell us, and if I could believe them, I could sleep more soundly at nights, but I believe that the world is to be converted to God, and that here on this battleground, and by the same weapons with which the fight began, the conflict will be fought out to the glorious end! And I believe sin shall be trodden down by the Lord's people, who will win the victory through His blood! Still, look at fallen human nature. Whitefield used to say that it was half beast and half devil. He was very near the mark, but I question whether both beast and devil are not slandered by being compared with man when he is left to himself. Fallen man is a horrible creature, and each one of us may see a specimen in his own natural heart. But, oh, brothers and sisters let us gird up the loins of our minds and be encouraged! Let us look beyond the fall, and see what humanity once was, and what it may yet become! Jesus took human nature upon Him, and thereby did it the highest honor—an honor which has more than rolled away its reproach. Though free from sin, yet His nature was human, and in assuming such a nature, Jesus showed the value which He set by our race. He thought it worth His while to live, to suffer, to bleed, to *die* for such poor things as we have been speaking! He thought it worth His while to preach to a woman who had had five husbands, and was still living in sin. He thought it worth His while to permit His feet to be washed by a woman who had been a sinner; worth His while to mix with tax collectors and sinners—the common vulgar people of the great cities, for He was a physician, and He had come to heal the sick.

Never let us give way for a solitary moment to the proud feeling that anybody is below us, or that any human being is so mean that he is not worth looking after—and so bad that it is really of no use to hope to benefit him. Have I not heard it insinuated with regard to fallen women, "Oh, it is very melancholy work to have to deal with them, and probably it would be better to let them alone"? "And these children in the streets," say some, "these waifs and strays—would it not be better to let those eminent Christian dignitaries, the parochial authorities, instruct them in the poorhouse? Would it not be better to let the grosser evils alone? They are so hideous! Drunkenness, poverty, uncleanness—they so abound in this great city that one runs great risks, and undergoes much pollution in coming near them." Very superior beings sometimes talk in this fashion. I mean rather to say that *conceited* dimwits thus speak! Is there one being on the face of the earth so degraded that you and I might not have been *more* degraded still if the Lord's grace had been withheld? Does there live on the face of the earth one incarnation of wickedness that can possibly excel what *we* might have been if exposed to the same influences and denied the restraints of His love? How, then, can we talk of sinners as being beneath *us*? Jesus Christ stoops indeed, but for *you and me* it is almost impossible to stoop, for we are already down so low that we are near to the very lowest—and there is no great stoop possible on our part! This always cheers me. If my Master would give me a house full of convicts who had been imprisoned many times, and given over as hopeless, I should feel great confidence in preaching the gospel to them because I should think, "Now, I am in the very place in which my Master would have chosen to place *His* pulpit." Did He not come to save us who are convicts under the law of God? And if He has done that, let us never despair of the worst of felons! Never despair of a creature for whom Jesus died! Never despair of a creature the likes of which you may see by myriads before the eternal throne, singing, "We have washed our robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." City missionary, Bible woman, brother, sister, you who work among the lowest of the low—let the Master's hand touch you and give you strength!

Now, I have done when I have said a few inviting words to those here present who do not know much of the Redeemer, and have not yet believed in Him.

Do you feel yourselves guilty before God? Do you wish for His mercy? Come, then, and come *NOW*, for Jesus Christ, a man like yourselves, invites you! Remember, you cannot go to God without a

mediator, but you may go to *Christ* without a mediator, and you may go just as you are. You need no introduction to Jesus! I know that you can go and tell another man like yourself your sins, for some are so foolish to do so. They confess their sins to the priests, as Judas did, but you know Judas then went and hanged himself, which was a very likely thing to do after such a confession. But if you will go and tell your sins to Jesus, who is a man, and something more than a man, He will hear your story and it will not pollute His ear. He will listen to it, and He will do more—He will effectually absolve you! Have you not felt now that you have grown up to be big fellows, that you wished you were boys again, so that you could go at night and tell mother all that you had done wrong during the day, so that mother might kiss you, and you would go to bed feeling that everything was right again? Well, there is no mortal to whom you can go for such forgiveness now, but the Lord Jesus Christ will be to you all that your mother was when you were a child. Go and tell Him all about it, and ask Him to wash you in His blood, and cover you with His righteousness—and He will forgive you as freely as your own kind mother would have done! Jesus Christ will feel for you, for He knows all your temptations and weaknesses; if there is any sort of excuse to be made for you, He will make it. He did that for His murderers when He said, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” For that which cannot be extenuated at all, He has something a great deal better than an excuse—namely, His own atoning sacrifice.

He will tell you, “Simply trust Me, and I will save you.” Do not be afraid to come and tell Him all about your case. He will not spurn you! Did He ever spurn a sinner yet? The dogs eat the crumbs under His table, and He never drives them away. Dog of a sinner, you may come to His feet, and He will make something better than a dog of you! But you tell me, “The man Jesus is in heaven.” So much the better, for if He were here on earth in this Tabernacle, then He would not be over in Seven Dials, and Golden Lane, and over in North and East London, or away there in Scotland and Ireland, or across the seas! But being in heaven, He is within equal reach of us all, wherever we may be! And whoever darts a thought after Him, or a wish towards Him, and above all, whoever *trusts* Him, shall find in Him eternal life!

Sinner, you have not to deal with an absolute God; you have to deal with God *in* Jesus, the man! Come, then, to Him, for He has come to you. The ladder, Christ Jesus, you know, has its foot on earth, and its top in heaven. The higher we ascend, the more we shall delight to think of the glory of Christ! But our *first* business is to think of the foot of the ladder, and I want you tonight to know that its foot stands on earth, *just in front of you!* Jesus was such as you are; not sinful, that He could not be; but in all else like you—poor, and suffering, as you are. Now, put your foot on the first rung of the ladder, His manhood, and His bloody sacrifice upon the cross. Trust that, and you shall climb till you ascend where the full Deity of the incarnate Savior blazes forth! And you shall rejoice in His second advent, and all the splendors of His future reign. Tonight you may leave those higher things alone. Begin at the *bottom* of the ladder, and commence to climb! The Lord help you! The Lord bless you! May He lay His hand on you at this moment, poor sinner! That will melt your heart! That will cheer your spirit! That will give you life from the dead! May He do it for His name's sake! Amen.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—DANIEL 10.

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